

House Committee on Resources Deficit Reduction Act

Mining Provision

What this provision is all about:

The House Resources Committee included several provisions in its budget reconciliation package that would update the 1872 Mining Law. These provisions were based on the conclusions and comments received from communities and mining companies throughout the West.

The provisions related to lands available for purchase are directly related to providing rural, western communities a sustainable economy once the mining industry leaves. Under current law, companies are required to remove the valuable infrastructure (i.e. warehouses, roads, energy infrastructure, etc...) after going through mine closure. At the request of local communities that are dependent upon the natural resources extraction industry, if the infrastructure could be left, it would provide for other sustainable economic development to occur.

The three scenarios this provision addresses are:

- ✓ Companies going through mine closure, which after purchasing the lands they have developed, can work with other industries and communities to provide sustainable economic development to the area.
- ✓ Companies seeking to consolidate their land management by being able to purchase “slivers,” or unpatentable lands. In this scenario, a company can apply to purchase lands that are unpatentable in the middle of currently mined lands. This provides for better management at the industry level and the federal level.
- ✓ Companies consolidating lands and management in the West due to the “checkerboard” patterns i.e. private – public – private parcels etc...